

MONTAGUE PUBLIC LIBRARIES TRUSTEES
MEETING AGENDA (Amended 10/19)
Monday, October 23rd, 2023 at 6:00PM

Turners Falls Senior Center
62 5th St, Turners Falls, MA, 01376

1. Call to order
2. Public Comment Period: Please limit comments to two minutes

REGULAR BUSINESS *(Please read all handouts prior to meeting. Meeting time will be for edits and questions only.)*

3. Approval of minutes from 9/25/23
4. Director's update—See attached report with programming stats included
5. Update from: Strategic Planning
6. Update from: Building Committee
7. Update from: Personnel Committee
8. Update from: Budget Committee
9. Update from: Friends of the Library

DISCUSSION TOPICS

10. Repairing the handicap ramp railing at MC—The ramp handrailing is currently very rusty. It's unclear if it would merely require re-painting or if replacement is necessary.
11. Review MPLCP brochure draft
12. Discussion and approval of MPLCP article requests for the CIC
13. Tabulating survey results from building survey
14. Focus group update
15. Feedback regarding anti-book banning letter to legislators
16. Items not anticipated within 48 hours of meeting. Votes may be taken
17. Next meeting date, agenda suggestions
18. Adjourn

October 2023 Director's Report

1. The libraries' building survey has been completed by 53 individuals online with many more patrons completing a paper copy. At Steve Ellis' recommendation, I've requested that the survey information and link be posted to the town website's carousel and to the town's Facebook page. Copies went to all Montague Reporter subscribers on 10/5 and trustees will help distribute print copies at the Falls Fest. Miryam Vesset assisted with getting the survey translated into Spanish and also distributed at the High School. Spanish copies were distributed to Montague Catholic Social Ministries as well.

The survey and the wishing trees will run through the end of this month.

2. Thanks to the Friends, the libraries now have a pass to Historic Deerfield, which allows free entry to 4 individuals. The pass includes a calendar of events for borrowers to browse.
3. Jean Dempsey made me aware of the existence of Craftsy, a craft database that provides:
 - Over 1,400 in-depth instructional video classes; covering 20 different creative passions
 - Over 3,500 total hours of detailed commercial-free video instruction
 - Each class includes downloadable class materials to support the video
 - Access to thousands of written articles, projects, and tips

Unlike Creative Bug, Craftsy only charges libraries by use, so if the database doesn't catch on, no money will be wasted. That said, the director at Greenfield noted they have an average of 300 uses per month! I look forward to seeing how well it does here and did restrict our patrons to 100 total uses per month. Angela posted promotions of the database on the library website and social media pages last week,

4. The town is beginning a wage and class study with consultants from the Collins Institute at UMass Amherst. First, all town staff will complete surveys and interviews in which they'll describe the nature of their work, then this feedback will be compared with jobs of similar descriptions in other towns. New job descriptions will be written up and the consultants will make recommendations regarding changes in pay, etc this winter. Following union negotiations, any increases in pay would come up for a vote at next year's special fall town meeting. There will not be decreases.
5. The Opioid Taskforce of Franklin County is setting up naloxoboxes, AKA mounted boxes that contain doses of the overdose-reversing nasal spray, Narcan, in various sites around Montague. I've agreed to allow one of the boxes to be affixed to the side of the Millers Falls Branch and will coordinate with Tom about the installation. The naloxobox coordinator noted that overdoses have increased by 100% in the last year, likely due to drugs being laced with fentanyl and/or xylazine.
6. Kathleen has started to weed the fiction collection at Millers Falls Branch. There are 1,300 titles to be weeded. I'm grateful to the friends for their willingness to help coordinate pick-up of deleted items.

This weeding project will kick off an FY25 action plan item that I've been thinking about for a long time: re-organizing the collections at Millers to make better use of the space. Of course, this is an initiative that would require a lot of input. I anticipate discussing different ideas in earnest after the MPLCP application gets submitted in May 2024.

7. Per the requirements of the state, I'll submit two article requests for consideration at town meeting in May. The first will request \$150k to support the planning and design phase of a library projects and the second will request that the town allow the libraries to apply for, receive, and expend state funds. Drafts of each article must be submitted to Walter by Nov. 1. They're attached for board approval.
8. Four staff members attended the New England Library Association conference in Springfield between 10/15 and 10/17. The conference was very heavy in teen and children's programming sessions this year. Angela participated in sessions on mobile makerspaces and is considering pursuing grant funding for a mobile makerspace.
9. Steve recommends that we bring up the town-wide library plan to the selectboard for approval in November. This document states that constructing an addition on the Carnegie or a new library down the road in Turners Falls will not impact or in any way jeopardize the two existing branch libraries.
10. Staff have noticed the cracks in the walls of the Carnegie seem to be getting bigger. The front door was also not shutting as easily as it used to, regardless of the weather. As such there's speculation that the building may have done some settling. Scott smartly took photos of all the existing cracks so that we can compare in 6 months or so. Jim from the DPW sanded a bit of the door down and re-stained it to allow patrons to open it more easily.
11. Jim also noted that the roof on the overhang above the staff entrance of the Carnegie needed to be stripped and re-shingled. Given that we still have \$2k from a 2017 Carnegie roof appropriation that could be used for the fix, I asked Walter if this was something we could ask Dan LaRochelle to tack on to his existing work at MC. Walter has requested a quote.
12. Speaking of Montague Center, the masonry repair at that branch has been completed and looks great! Dan is scheduled to start work on the roof this week or next.
13. Barbara facilitated her two focus groups this week. The in-person meeting had 8 participants and the zoom meeting will have 7-11. Barbara and I will meet on Monday 10/23 to discuss the feedback she receives, which I look forward to reporting to the board.
14. Lydia brought to my attention the LTC: Accessible Small and Rural Communities Round 2. "Libraries Transforming Communities (LTC): Accessible Small and Rural Communities is an initiative of the American Library Association (ALA) that provides community engagement and

accessibility resources to small and rural libraries to help them better serve people with disabilities. We are excited to announce Round 2 of this initiative.”

More information here: <https://www.ala.org/tools/librariestransform/libraries-transforming-communities/access/guidelines>

I think I’m going to apply for the purposes of building a new, ADA compliant website. What I like about it is the community engagement component, which would allow me to gather feedback from people with low vision who want to use our website.

Because there’s no guarantee that we’ll be funded, I’ll also apply for the NNLM technology grant, which will be released later this winter.

15. I applied for a \$2500 scholarship to attend PLA in April. The Mass Library System put together the scholarship program specifically for towns with populations of 10k or fewer. If I get the scholarship, then there will be enough funding leftover to send staff members to this summer’s Mass Library Association conference. I should hear by November 20th.

16. Finally, due to a very crummy rain forecast, the Falls Fest has been postponed until next year. The other event organizers and I learned a ton as we reinvented the wheel to get this festival off the ground. While I’m disappointed that we had to cancel, I’m looking forward to organizing next year’s festival with the benefit of all the information that we now know. I’ve informed our Mass Cultural Council festival liaison that we’ll be unable to expend their funds.

September program stats are on the next page.

September

Dates	Program Title	Program Location	Number of Participants	Intended Audience
WEEK 1				
5-Sep	Reception	Live In-Person On-Site (MC)	12	General Audience
6-Sep	LEGO	Live In-Person On-Site (TF)	7	ages 6-11
6-Sep	Reception	Live In-Person On-Site (MF)	5	General Audience
7-Sep	Playgroup	Live In-Person On-Site (TF)	0	ages 0-5
7-Sep	Reception	Live In-Person On-Site (TF)	10	General Audience
9-Sep	Back to School Bash	Live In-Person On-Site (TF)	24	ages 6-11
WEEK 2				
11-Sep	Garden Pests	Live In-Person On-Site (MC)	11	Adult
13-Sep	LEGO	Live In-Person On-Site (TF)	2	ages 6-11
14-Sep	Playgroup	Live In-Person On-Site (TF)	4	ages 0-5
16-Sep	Saturday Story Time	Live In-Person On-Site (TF)	8	ages 0-5
WEEK 3				
20-Sep	LEGO	Live In-Person On-Site (TF)	11	ages 6-11
20-Sep	Author Series	Live In-Person On-Site (MC)	25	Adult
21-Sep	Playgroup	Live In-Person On-Site (TF)	0	ages 0-5
21-Sep	Book Club	Live In-Person On-Site (MC)	8	Adult

22-Sep	Youth Advisory	Live In-Person On-Site (TF)	2	YA
23-Sep	Saturday Story Time	Live In-Person On-Site (TF)	5	ages 0-5
23-Sep	Great Stories Club Kick-off	Live In-Person Off-Site (TF)	2	YA
WEEK 4				
27-Sep	LEGO	Live In-Person On Site (TF)	5	ages 6-11
28-Sep	Playgroup	Live In-Person On-Site (TF)	8	ages 0-5
28-Sep	Sheffield Elementary Outreach	Live In-Person Off-Site (TF)	48	ages 6-11
30-Sep	Saturday Story Time/GF Farmer's Market Outreach	Live In-Person Off-Site (Peske Park)	5	ages 0-5
All Month	Take&Make CRAFT	Live In-Person On Site, self-led(All 3 Branches)	89	ages 6-11
All Month	Take&Make SCIENCE	Live In-Person On Site, self-led (All 3 Branches)	95	ages 6-11
All Month	Back-to-School Scavenger Hunt	Live In-Person On Site, self-led (All 3 Branches)	28	ages 6-11
			TOTAL:	
			386	



Annual Town Meeting

SPECIAL ARTICLE REQUEST – CAPITAL EXPENSE

Budget Year
FY 25

This form is intended for use with capital article submissions \geq \$25,000 with a lifespan of 5+ years. For major building projects, please consult the Town Administrator.

Please complete this form in its entirety! Initial Submission due November 1

☐

Check Here if this an expedited request for Winter 2023 Special Town Meeting

Department:	<u>Libraries</u>	Submitted by:	<u>Caitlin Kelley</u>
Item/Project Cost:	<u>0</u>	Date Prepared:	<u>10/17/2023</u>
Item/Project Title:	<u>Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program Application and Acceptance of Funds</u>		

Proposed Article Wording:

To see if the Town will vote to give permission to the Montague Public Libraries to apply for, accept, and expend State grant funds from the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program, if said MPLCP grant is approved, said sum to be expended by the Town for library assessment, planning, feasibility and/or design, or act in any manner relating thereto including any and all incidental and related costs.

Detailed Description for Background Materials: *(Provide a full description of the item or service. Use attachments as needed.)*

The Montague Public Libraries intend to apply for the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program.

If accepted into the program, the libraries and Library Trustees would first accept funds to support the planning and design phase of the project. During that time, the Libraries' director, the Trustees' Building Committee, and a special Community Building Committee would work with an architect on design options for both an expansion of the existing Carnegie Library and a new main library, which would be located at 38 Avenue A. Public comment would be sought and a ballot initiative to support the project would be voted on at a future town meeting. Should the project pass a ballot initiative, then the state would fund up to 67.53% of eligible construction costs.

Scoping Questions**Yes****No**

Please elaborate in the comments box at bottom of the page

Do you have a written estimate or proposal for the scope of work?

☐☒

If yes, attach the estimate

Is there a lease option for this expense?

☐☒

Will this item or project replace a capital asset?

☒☐

Will this create ongoing costs or savings?

☐☒

Will this leverage grant or other external funding?

☒☐

Is this request identified on the Capital Improvement Plan?

☒☐**Describe how the project/ purchase will be managed**

The Library Director will manage the project with support from the Library Trustees' Building Committee and will collaborate with an architect hired with project funds.

Why is it essential that the Town makes this investment now?

The Carnegie Library does not meet the needs of the Montague community and has not for the past 108 years, which is when the first expansion of the building was proposed in 1915. The opportunity to either expand the Carnegie Library or build a new main library with over 67.53% of eligible construction costs covered will not come around again for many years and there's no guarantee that the state will have the resources to be as generous in their next construction round. To act now is to make a sound investment in our community with the goal of providing a library space that serves the needs of everyone in Montague.

Relative Priority : Your assessment of the how important this is to the Town at the present time.

Critical Importance

Highly Important

Moderately Important

X

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Comments and additional information:



Annual Town Meeting

SPECIAL ARTICLE REQUEST – CAPITAL EXPENSE

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Check Here if this an expedited request for Winter 2023 Special Town Meeting

Department:	<u>Libraries</u>	Submitted by:	<u>Caitlin Kelley</u>
Item/Project Cost:	<u>\$150,000</u>	Date Prepared:	<u>10/17/2023</u>
Item/Project Title:	<u>Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program Funding Appropriation</u>		

Proposed Article Wording:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds, borrow, or otherwise provide the sum of **\$150,000**, or any other amount, for the purpose of funding for the planning and design phase of the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program, including any and all incidental and related costs, or pass any vote or votes in relation thereto.

Detailed Description for Background Materials: *(Provide a full description of the item or service. Use attachments as needed.)*

The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners requires municipalities applying for state construction program funding to appropriate \$150,000 for the planning and design phase of the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program. Should the town fail to be accepted into the state construction program, these funds will not be used.

During the planning and design phase of the project, the Libraries's director, the Trustees' Building Committee, and a special Community Building Committee will work with an architect on design options for both an expansion of the existing Carnegie Library and a new main library, which would be located at 38 Avenue A. Public comment would be sought and a ballot initiative would be voted on at a future town meeting. Based on Montague's community need, the town is eligible to have 67.53% of eligible construction costs covered by the state program.

Scoping Questions

Yes

No

Please elaborate in the comments box at bottom of the page

Do you have a written estimate or proposal for the scope of work?

☐☒

If yes, attach the estimate

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☐☒

Will this item or project replace a capital asset?

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Comments and additional information: